

"Why, sir?"

Bigham growled again.

"Some of these married women in town are nothing better than man-traps. I'm sorry I introduced you to her, only she made me."

If the old general had had any tact, he might have frightened Jack, though it was probably too late. As it was, Jack thought his dear new friend was being abused. It was only a fortnight since he had spoken to her, and she was already writing to him every other day, and signing herself his friend! Jack shut up with Bigham, and wouldn't dine with him next time he was asked. It was Bigham who spoke to Cassilis. He called Mrs. Buckingham a blasted cat.

Jack called on her that afternoon. She had asked him to come. "Your poor friend is sad," said the letter, which Jack put in his pocketbook with seven others in the same handwriting. He found his "poor friend" alone, dressed in half-mourning, and posed in a half-light. She looked best in that light, in spite of her determination to be a beautiful woman which had imposed on three-quarters of the world.

"I wondered if you would *care* to come," she sighed, as she gave him a really beautiful hand.